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ZNY CCCCC ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4381
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 002104

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DEPT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF/SPG, AND AF/RSA
NSC FOR COURVILLE AND SHORTLEY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/30/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: DARFUR: LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE TO PROCEED DPA
MEETING

REF: A. STATE 140816

[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 02010

[1](#)C. KHARTOUM 02020

[1](#)D. KHARTOUM 02045

Classified By: P/E CHIEF E. WHITAKER, REASON: SECTIONS 1.4 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Discussions among SLM leaders, NGO representatives, and the international community indicate support for holding a leadership conference in Darfur for SLM non-signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). A popularly based leadership structure for the movements may be a pre-requisite to build a solid expression of support for the DPA. However, as questions remain about who should attend a leadership conference and what role the international community should play, the USG should avoid direct involvement in the SLM's internal political development and not lend legitimacy to an event that has the potential to further splinter the movement. Non-signatories can only support the DPA if they form coherent structures and select their own leadership.

[1](#)2. (C) Traveling with UN and UK colleagues, the Embassy's Senior Security Advisor will conduct exploratory meetings with SLM commanders and political leaders in El Fasher, Nyala, El Geneina, and Eastern and Western Jebel Marra beginning September 2. In addition to listening to SLM representatives, he will deliver this message: The USG is a partner for peace, not war, and any conference bringing together SLM factions should result in constructive political cooperation, not coordinated military mobilization or more violence.

[1](#)3. (C) First Vice President Salva Kiir returned August 30 from a 24-hour trip to the Eritrean capital, where he met separately with Eritrean officials, Abdulwahid al Nur, and Ahmed Abdulshafi (Note: Kiir was reportedly accompanied by SPLM National Assembly Caucus Chair Yassir Arman and Presidential Advisor Maghzoub Al Khalifa. End Note.) In a statement following his return to Khartoum, Kiir said his goal was to persuade Abdulwahid and Abdulshafi to support the DPA; he noted that President Isaias had developed a roadmap to gain their adherence to the Agreement. Though the details of this plan are not yet public, Kiir announced that he planned to brief President Bashir on its contents in the near future.

[1](#)4. (C) Abdulwahid and Abdulshafi told Kiir and Embassy staff that they would attend a conference in Darfur if the GoS provided security guarantees. This agreement is a shift from previous proposals to hold the conference in Southern Sudan under the sponsorship of Kiir and the SPLM. NGO contacts and international partners, however, said that many important leaders, particularly field commanders, would not attend a

gathering outside Darfur for military reasons. If the leadership conference is a success, a second event to promote the DPA could be held in the South to include the newly selected leaders, Kiir, the SPLM, and Senior Assistant to the President Minni Minawi. At an August 31 meeting of the AU Partners Group, Western diplomats endorsed this approach; participants agreed to continue engaging non-signatories and to coordinate with the SPLM.

15. (C) The international community may be able to obtain GoS security guarantees should a leadership conference move forward. During the recent visit of A/S Frazer, Al Khalifa expressed his preference for dialogue with the DPA non-signatories, rather than sanctions, and EU Special Envoy for Darfur Pekka Haavisto said that Al Khalifa and Foreign Minister Lam Akol had supported a leadership conference.
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